

## PERRY'S JAPAN EXPEDITION.

THE MYSTERIES OF BOOKMAKING.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SAR: According to the report in THE TRIBUNE (Oct. 14, 1858) of the address of Dr. Vinton, at the inauguration of the Statue of Commodore Perry, he asserted, "from positive knowledge," that although Dr. Francis L. Hawks is supposed to have edited the work known as *The Report of the United States Japan Expedition*, "he wrote nothing whatever but the preface, and that the rest is a direct transcript of Commodore Perry's manuscript."

Having been a joint compiler with the late Dr. Hawks, of the book in question, and, therefore, feeling myself authorized to speak on the subject, I venture to deny what Dr. Vinton reported to have derived from "positive knowledge." Dr. Hawks did write more than the preface, and the "rest," so far from being "a direct transcript of Commodore Perry's manuscript," is mainly compiled from other material. The original journal of the Commodore was exceedingly meager in quality and quantity, and bore no trace, according to my recollection, of those early studies of the Spectator with which Dr. Vinton edited him. The MSS. would hardly, if printed verbatim, cover more than a page of THIS TRIBUNE. It was indeed bound up in two or more pretty looking volumes, but the writing was only on one side of each page, and formed a very narrow strain of text meandering through an extensive continent of paper. We had at our service not only the scanty diary of the Commodore, but the internal reports of the treaty negotiations taken down by his Secretaries, and the fall journals of Mr. Bayard Taylor, and other subordinate officers of the expedition. These latter form the main staple of the compilation.

The family of the late Commodore Perry must have the original MSS. in their possession, and Dr. Vinton, who is a relative, can easily substantiate for himself the correctness of what I have said, and thus substitute fact for his assertion of "positive knowledge." Your obt. servt., ROBERT TOWERS.

New-York, Oct. 14, 1858.

Robert Towers.

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